



SENATOR RUNNER'S WEEK IN REVIEW

A WEEKLY REVIEW THAT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED AND UP-TO-DATE



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GOVERNOR'S BUDGET – NO NEW TAXES, SLOW GROWTH ON SPENDING

As your representative, I promise to protect your hard-earned dollars and remind legislators in Sacramento that the numbers in the budget aren't just abstract figures on an excel spreadsheet or Monopoly money to play with, but it's your money. I have taken an oath to serve you and I will ensure that each dollar spent is not wasted or going down into the black hole of the state's bloated bureaucracy never to be seen again.

This year, the Governor has proposed a bold agenda that will shake up "business as usual" in Sacramento. The Governor's budget is a balanced approach which does not raise taxes, eliminates government waste, streamlines and consolidates duplicative government programs, and slows the rate of growth in spending.

There are several major components to the Governor's proposed budget including education reform, pension reform, reforms in the budgetary process, elimination of government waste, to name a few.

EDUCATION:

The Governor proposes to increase education funding for K-14 schools by \$2.9 billion – a 6.1 percent increase – bringing education funding up to \$50 billion. In this budget proposal, education funding is growing at a faster rate than statewide general fund expenditures which is proposed to increase by 4.2 percent.

PENSION REFORM:

The Governor also proposes major reforms in the state's pension system which will provide a savings of \$876.7 million in this budget year and \$1.1 billion in the next budget year. These reforms are balanced and bring state employees' pensions more in line with the retirement benefits generally provided for employees in private business. Without these reforms to stop the growing pension crisis, the taxpayers will be paying more and more each year for overly generous benefits for state employees.

BUDGET CONTROL REFORM:

Governor Schwarzenegger also announced his Budget Control Reform Proposal – a proposal which intends to prevent California's budget problems from ever happening again. This proposal would require \$250 million in across-the-board reductions whenever revenues are lower than spending in every program. The intent is to prevent the Legislature from putting off deficits until the next year or enacting gimmicky, slight-of-hand tricks that were used in the past.

ELIMINATING GOVERNMENT WASTE:

The Governor is also very serious about eliminating government waste and using his executive authority to eliminate over 100 boards and commissions. Many of these are comprised of appointees that receive \$100,000 in salary but only meet a few times a year. He also has found creative ways through strategic sourcing to allow the

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state to buy goods and services through bulk -- saving \$96 million. Other proposals to eliminate government waste will have an additional savings of over \$150 million.

TRANSPORTATION:

The Governor's transportation plan has not been unveiled with its details yet, but includes GoCalifornia, which is expected to be a comprehensive package of legislation designed to enhance transportation management and project delivery. In the budget proposal, the dollars that are designated in the transportation fund for improvements of California roads were diverted again to the General Fund. I hope that we will be able to get these funds back into the transportation fund which is critical to lessen our commutes and get us home more quickly to our families.

Overall, the Governor's budget proposal is bold in every area of government and it is important for the public to have this debate. This budget is not perfect – it lowers our deficit from \$10 billion to a little over \$2 billion. However, the Governor's proposed reforms will change systemic problems in our budget in order to prevent this crisis from ever happening again.

We should expect the special interests to try and spin these proposals and sway public opinion. Expect rhetoric about extreme cuts in the budget – but do not be fooled. Look at the numbers. The Governor's proposed budget slows the growth in our spending but all programs receive a little more than they received last year while refusing to increase the tax burden on Californians.

I will urge my fellow legislators that it is time to stop listening to special interests and its time to listen to the people of California. After all, it's your money.

-- George C. Runner, Jr.
State Senator, 17th District

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